

VZCZCXRO3115  
OO RUEHPT  
DE RUEHBY #0020 0080617  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 080617Z JAN 10  
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2497  
INFO RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 5594  
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 2663  
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 1862  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3794  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0206  
RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE 6888  
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH 5152  
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY 5159  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM

UNCLAS CANBERRA 000020

SIPDIS

STATE FOR OES/IHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [SENV](#) [AS](#)

SUBJECT: CORRECTED COPY -- AUSTRALIA BRACES FOR MOSQUITO  
BORNE DISEASE JUMP

CORRECTED COPY -- FIXED FORMATTING ERROR IN PARA 1

11. (SBU) Australian health authorities are concerned about an expected jump in the number of mosquito borne diseases in New South Wales and Southern Queensland, including Ross River Virus (RRV), following heavy summer rains. Department of Health and Ageing Surveillance Branch Director Sally Goodspeed told Econoff January 8 that DOHA is stepping up coordination with state and local health practitioners and is trying to head off a big jump in RRV cases in the next few weeks through a public awareness campaign and heightened surveillance. The heavy rains and subsequent flooding have created ideal conditions for a boom in mosquito populations, and the government is advising residents of flooded areas to take precautions against mosquitoes, including long clothing, use of insect repellent, and ensuring mosquito screens are secure. Another concern is a possible spike in cases of the related Chikungunya Virus, which has more serious health impacts and occurs infrequently in Australia but is widespread in Asia.

12. (SBU) RRV causes joint pain, arthritic fever, and fatigue with symptoms lasting in many cases for months. Severe cases can result in debilitating symptoms that last years. RRV and other mosquito borne diseases are reported to the National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System. NNDSS data shows that there were 4729 cases of Ross River Virus and 19 cases of Chikungunya in 2009.

CLUNE